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MN970400. Guantanamo's Door to Door Service Targets
Customers

Guantanamo Bay, Cuba - Need to get your prescription
refilled? If you live on the naval base in Guantanamo Bay,
you can now have your medication delivered to your work or
home.

The pharmacy at U.S. Naval Hospital (USNH) Guantanamo
Bay, started the program for patients whose work hours made
it difficult for them to pick up their medication, who
didn't have a car available to get to the pharmacy or had
other logistical problems.

"The program has been particularly useful for our aging
Cuban exile population who can't easily come to the hospital
for medication refills," said Joan Marsh, USNH Guantanamo
Bay's community health nurse.

Patients who wish to have their prescription refill
delivered to them at their workspace or home call in the
request to the pharmacy. Pharmacy technicians deliver the
medications on Wednesdays or Saturdays. They also provide
information on how to take the medication properly.

In addition to making it easier for patients to get
their medication, the hospital has found there are fewer
incidences where medication is ordered but never picked up.
By LT E. C. Chamberlain, MSC, USNH Guantanamo Bay

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MN970401. Norfolk's Dental Center Fights Tobacco Battle

Norfolk, VA - Polonium, formaldehyde, cadmium, cyanide, arsenic, benzene, lead, nicotine, and carbon monoxide - the chemicals in tobacco read like the contents of a toxic waste dump.

Of all of the above, one of the most deadly is carbon monoxide, a colorless, odorless gas that can steal the life-giving oxygen from your body and put unnecessary stress on your cardiovascular system.

To help illustrate the point, Naval Dental Center (NDC) Norfolk is installing a carbon monoxide detector, a device that looks a lot like the breathalyzer used to detect alcohol. But in this case, it detects the carbon monoxide in a smoker's system - carbon monoxide that can remain as long as 24 hours after a smoker's last cigarette.

According to CDR Larry Williams, DC, NDC Norfolk's wellness coordinator, the carbon monoxide released from cigarettes starves muscles for oxygen because blood cells will "pick up" carbon monoxide more readily than it will pick up oxygen.

"That's what contributes to cardiovascular problems (in smokers)," said Williams. He said that while many people associate tobacco with lung and other cancers, it's also a major cause of cardiovascular diseases, much of it caused by the carbon monoxide in cigarettes.

According to Williams, the dental clinic is the perfect place for the detector. It's a tool that can be used to show Sailors and Marines who come in for their annual exams about the dangers of smoking during what he calls a "teachable moment."

"You got the patient in the chair for a non-acute dental appointment, you have the time to talk to them (about their overall health)," he said.

The staff is now being trained on how to use the detector, and plans to begin using it regularly with their patients who are smokers in October.

Other anti-tobacco initiatives the clinic has taken on include collaborating with the Tidewater American Cancer Society to provide tobacco cessation programs for smokers and helping with the training of tobacco cessation facilitators for Line personnel. Additionally, NDC Norfolk staff members will be spokespersons in the Tidewater area during the upcoming Great American Smokeout in November. By CDR Wayne Quesenberry, MSC, NDC Norfolk

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MN970402. "HM1 Jackson is a Hero!"

Dear Vice Admiral Koenig,

I wanted to let you know about a superb Independent Duty Corpsman by the name of HM1 Darrell Jackson who is assigned to the USS STOUT (DDG 55).

HM1 Jackson is a hero!

Early one morning, while STOUT was in port in Florida, HM1 Jackson went jogging with his shipmate, ETC Lee Smith. Shortly after they'd started jogging, Chief Smith collapsed. Jackson quickly started cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), continuing even while four cars passed him by. Finally, a car with two nurses stopped. Jackson continued CPR with one of the nurses while the other went for help.

Local paramedics arrived but were not as aggressive in the resuscitation as Jackson would have liked. He took charge, diagnosing an unstable heart beat and defibrillating (shocking) Smith, bring his heart back to stable rhythm.

By 8 a.m. - three hours after Chief Smith and Petty Officer Jackson began their faithful jog - Smith had undergone angioplasty, clearing arteries that were almost completely closed.

As a cardiologist, I know how critical immediate and effective CPR is, as a predictor of patient outcome. HM1 Jackson performed such superb pulmonary and cardiac resuscitation that Chief Smith suffered no side effects from his sudden death episode.

HM1 Jackson epitomizes the best in Navy Medicine. I would like to commend HM1 Jackson for his superb skill and lifesaving heroics.

But most importantly, my family and I would like to say thank you to him for saving my brother, Chief Smith's, life.

Very respectfully, CAPT Candace Gibbin, MC

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MN970403. Language No Barrier to Compassion in Okinawa

Okinawa, Japan - U.S. Naval Hospital (USNH) Okinawa and U.S. Naval Dental Center (USNDC) Okinawa recently united to help a Republic of Korea Navy sailor riding aboard USS MOBILE BAY (CG-53) while on a port visit to Okinawa.

Five hours before leaving port, Neng Ho Kim began suffering severe tooth pain. He was transferred immediately to the Navy's Evans Dental Clinic where he was diagnosed with abscessed teeth. LCDR John Shea, DC, and LCDR Marty Hickey, DC, immediately removed the teeth, fulfilling Kim's health care needs.

But left behind when USS MOBILE BAY departed, Kim's next dilemma was how to get home, a problem that was complicated by the fact that he spoke little English.

Enter HN Chong Kim of USNH Okinawa's alcohol rehabilitation department, who acted as interpreter while the hospital's Fleet liaison, HM1 Robert Eddy, worked on travel arrangements.

While arrangements were being made and Neng Ho Kim recovered from his surgery, HMC Tom Dunwoody welcomed Neng Ho Kim into his home.

"I'm glad I could help," said Dunwoody. "My wife speaks Kim's native language. I know he felt much better being able to communicate."

Both health care facilities received kudos for their

beyond-the-call-of duty efforts. Commander, Task Force 70, sent a message to thank all involved for the excellent treatment given Neng Ho Kim.

"It was a team effort and we're all happy it had a pleasant outcome," said CDR Ken Takahashi, MSC, the hospital's director for administration.

By HMCN(SW) Michael C. Carr, USNH Okinawa

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MN970404. Patuxent River Captures Customer Service Award

Patuxent River, MD - Naval Hospital (NH) Patuxent River has been named the top Navy hospital in customer satisfaction for 1997 by the Department of Defense Military Health Services System.

Random patient questionnaires from every naval medical treatment facility were scored and ranked. Customer satisfaction honors were awarded in three categories - medical center, hospital and clinic. Patuxent River's facility won in the hospital category.

CAPT Paul Campbell, MC, the hospital's commanding officer, said the customer service award is the first of its type in the defense department.

"What made the contest unique," Campbell said, "was that no one - patients or medical staff - was aware of the judging. It was all done anonymously. It's a big-time team effort. We have providers, nurses and physicians who do a good job, but they can't do it without all the support they have - secretaries, people who order all the supplies, people who set up appointments and the people who keep the hospital clean.

"The other aspect is we've made a number of customer-orientated changes," Campbell added. He said the hospital has improved central appointment procedures, increased accessibility to the medical care system, offered after-hours care, established a once-a-month Saturday clinic and offered physical examinations once a month.

By Jimmie Turner, Naval Air Station Patuxent River

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MN970405. TwentyNine Palms Exceeds TRICARE Prime Goals

TwentyNine Palms, CA - Naval Hospital (NH) TwentyNine Palms exceeded one of its key goals for the year by enrolling more than 75 percent of its active duty family members and 39 percent of eligible retirees in TRICARE Prime.

The hospital's goal was to have at least 35 percent of its eligible beneficiaries enrolled in TRICARE Prime by January 1, 1998. Of those members enrolled in Prime, 98 percent selected NH Twentynine Palms as their Primary Care Manager (PCM).

Key to the success was partnering with the Line commanders at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center. Backed by the commanders, the hospital staff conducted frequent briefings and ensured almost 100 percent of the active duty population at the Center were able to get the

information they needed about TRICARE.

Additionally, Marines and Sailors with families reporting to the Combat Center are now required to check in through the hospital's TRICARE Service Center so they can receive individual information on TRICARE and enroll their families in Prime, if they wish.

Even with this success, the hospital isn't resting on its laurels.

"We can't just sit back now and relax," said CAPT Joan Huber, NC, Twentynine Palms' executive officer. "We must maintain our patients' trust by providing the best possible medical care with guaranteed access standards, mixed in with the very best customer service."

By Dan Barber, NH Twentynine Palms

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MN9704406. June Wins Prestigious Conrad Award

Bethesda, MD - CAPT Carl June, MC, who retired from the Navy last year, has been awarded the Office of Naval Research's prestigious Conrad award for his research in immunology.

The award cited June for his "remarkable accomplishments and performance as a medical research scientist, clinician, Professor of Medicine, and Head (Emeritus) of the Immune Cell Biology Program (at the Naval Medical Research Institute in Bethesda, MD)."

June is one of the world's most renown immunologists. He now works at the Henry M. Jackson Foundation on the National Naval Medical Center Bethesda campus.

The Conrad award is presented annually and commemorates CAPT Robert Dexter Conrad, who in 1946 was one of the moving forces to establish a naval scientific research organization, which resulted in the establishment of the Office of Naval Research.

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MN970407. TRICARE Question and Answer

Question: I just enrolled in TRICARE Prime. How long is my enrollment period?

Answer: TRICARE Prime requires a 12-month enrollment. At the end of this initial enrollment period, you must choose either to continue your enrollment in Prime or participate in TRICARE Standard or Extra.

It's important to remember that while you're enrolled in TRICARE Prime, should you wish to seek care from someone besides your Primary Care Manager (PCM), you must first get a referral. Otherwise, you may be required to pay up to 50 percent of the cost for your "unreferred" visit to a doctor!

Additional information on TRICARE is available on the World-Wide Web at <www.ha.osd.mil>.

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MN970408. Healthwatch: Home Sweet Home - Or Is It?

Many of us consider our homes a safe haven from danger.

We lock doors and windows to shut out crime, dirt, noise and everything else "out there."

But did you know that you when close your doors and windows, you may also be creating an unhealthy environment in your home by closing in air pollution?

Home air may be contaminated by pollutants brought in on clothes and shoes, or by molds, fungi or bacteria from a poorly maintained air conditioning system, poorly ventilated bathroom, or damp, musty basement or attic.

Plywood and building materials used in home construction can produce formaldehyde vapors. Gas appliances may leak carbon monoxide and nitrogen dioxide. Homes that are well sealed for energy efficiency may also be traps for these pollutants.

Pollution can cause allergy symptoms, such as sneezing, sniffing and coughing, as well as eye irritation, asthma, and chronic bronchitis.

However, there are some steps you can take to reduce some of the pollutants in your home. Industrial hygienists at Navy Environmental Health Center (NEHC) in Norfolk, VA recommend taking these steps:

- Keep potted plants, one plant for every 100 square feet. The most effective air cleaning plants are spider plants, philodendrons, palms, ivy, ferns, and chrysanthemums. Be careful not to over-water them; extra water can set up an environment for molds and mildew.
- Keep rooms well ventilated rather than using deodorizers and moth crystals to mask stale smells.
- Air dry-cleaned clothes outdoors before bringing them into the house.
- Make your home a non-smoking household or restrict smoking to one well-ventilated room.
- Remove your shoes and leave them by the front door. Vacuum cleaners pick up only about 10 percent of the dirt in carpets; use a higher efficiency bag in your vacuum cleaner (check with the manufacturer for ones to use with your model). Better yet, buy a high-efficiency particulate (HEPA)-filtered vacuum cleaner.
- Vent gas appliances to the outside. Choose gas appliances with spark ignition instead of pilot lights. Inspect stoves and furnaces for leaks. Install a carbon monoxide detector if you have gas appliances. Avoid using natural gas or kerosene space heaters.
- If you have an attached garage, move your car out of it before warming the car up. The same goes for gasoline-powered lawn mowers.
- Operate internal combustion engine devices outdoors only. Operate them far enough from the house so exhaust gases will not enter open windows and doors.
- Keep air conditioning systems and furnaces clean and professionally inspected annually. Change air filters monthly using correctly sized filters. Make sure condensate drip pan drains are not blocked and that water does not accumulate.

- To minimize growth sites for bacteria and fungi, avoid using humidifiers, especially room humidifiers. If you must, use humidifiers that make steam from the water before it enters the house. Flow-through humidifiers are preferred over those with a reservoir. Set the humidity level on humidifiers between 30 and 50 percent and fill them with distilled water. Clean and disinfect the tank, nozzle, and generator daily.

- Dry out water-damaged items as quickly as possible (within 6 to 12 hours) to prevent growth of molds and mildew. Do not allow materials within your home to be repetitively water-damaged; correct the cause of the water intrusion.

- Vent range hoods to the outside to exhaust cooking odors, smoke and grease particles. Unvented range hoods are ineffective.

- Leave asbestos and lead-based paint undisturbed, or have a licensed professional inspect and offer recommendations for safe removal.

- Look for low emissions (low volatility or odor) paints, cleaners, and adhesives, when painting, hanging wall paper, or doing household projects. Ventilate the area well by opening windows.

By Vera Ando-Winstead, Bureau of Medicine & Surgery and
Karen Murphy, NEHC

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Feedback and comments are welcome. Story submissions are encouraged. Contact Jan Davis, MEDNEWS editor, at e-mail <mednews@bms200.med.navy.mil>, telephone 202/762-3223 (DSN 762-3223), or fax 202/762-3224.